We claim:

1. A method of dynamic performance determination of network connected output devices, wherein each output device has a set of characteristics, comprising:

entering a print job at a first network output device;

querying other output devices on the network to determine each other output device's characteristics and pending print jobs to determine if a specific other output device is capable of performing the entered print job;

transmitting a print job from the first network output device to each capable other output device;

reporting the completion of a single copy of the entered print job by each other output device; and

determining the number of copies of the entered print job to be printed by the first network output device and each other output device.

2. The method of claim 1 wherein said determining includes determining the number of copies of the entered print job to be printed by the first network output device and each other output device by optimizing the number of copies to be printed by all output devices after all of the other output devices have reported to the first output device.

3. The method of claim 1 wherein said determining includes determining the number of copies of the entered print job to be printed by the first network output device and each other output device by optimizing the number of copies to be printed by all output devices after a predetermined amount of time has passed from said transmitting, and wherein the number of copies to be printed is allocated only among the first output device and such other output devices which have reported the completion of printing the first copy of the entered print job.

4. The method of claim 1 wherein the number of copies to be printed exceeds a predetermined number, and wherein the first network output device initiates printing on itself and each of the other output devices as other output devices report completion of their first copy of the entered print job, and wherein the first network output device makes a final determination of the number of copies which each output device is to print after all of the other output devices have reported.

5. The method of claim 1 wherein said entering includes loading a print job into the first network output device and storing the print job in the first network output device.

6. The method of claim 1 wherein said determining is performed by the first network output device.

7. A method of dynamic performance determination of network connected output devices, wherein each output device has a set of characteristics, comprising:

entering a print job at a first network output device, including loading a print job into the first network output device and storing the print job in the first network output device;

querying other output devices on the network to determine each other output device's characteristics and pending print jobs to determine if a specific other output device is capable of performing the entered print job;

transmitting a print job from the first network output device to each capable other output device;

reporting the completion of a single copy of the entered print job by each other output device; and

determining, by the first network output device, number of copies of the entered print job to be printed by the first network output device and each other output device.

8. The method of claim 7 wherein said determining includes determining the number of copies of the entered print job to be printed by the first network output device and each other output device by optimizing the number of copies to be printed by all output devices after all of the other output devices have reported to the first output device.

9. The method of claim 7 wherein said determining includes determining the number of copies of the entered print job to be printed by the first network output device and each other output device by optimizing the number of copies to be printed by all output devices after a predetermined amount of time has passed from said transmitting, and wherein the number of copies to be printed is allocated only among the first output device and such other output devices which have reported the completion of printing the first copy of the entered print job.

10. The method of claim 7 wherein the number of copies to be printed exceeds a predetermined number, and wherein the first network output device initiates printing on itself and each of the other output devices as other output devices report completion of their first copy of the entered print job, and wherein the first network output device makes a final determination of the number of copies which each output device is to print after all of the other output devices have reported.